

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-13 and 15 are pending. Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 11-13 and 15 have been amended. Claim 14 has been cancelled. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The examiner objected to the specification due to various references to the claims. These references have now been deleted by the amendments to the specification.

The examiner objected to the drawings due to failure to show the vehicle seat. New Figure 4 is included in this amendment which shows a vehicle seat. No new matter is added by the new figure, since it shows a basic seat and other elements that are referred to in the specification.

The examiner rejected claim 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The claims have been amended to respond to the specific bases of rejection set forth by the examiner. It is submitted that this ground for rejection is now overcome.

The examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Re. 35,572 to *Lloyd, et al.* Applicant respectfully traverses the examiner's position in this regard. As applicant points out in the application at page 2, lines 1-12, prior art air springs (such as *Lloyd, et al.*) "are known which have a force-path air spring characteristic that runs linearly, the incline of which can be changed as a function of the design of the air spring and of an applied additional air volume, *but which have the same incline over the entire force-path air spring characteristic.* In such air springs, use is generally made of additional air volumes that are kept constant, which as actual air volume of the air spring are associated with the air spring moving in and out." *Lloyd, et al.* does not disclose an air spring system wherein there are

“inclines in the profile of a force-path air spring characteristic of the air spring in a first and in at least one further range are different from one another,” as claimed in claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is not anticipated by *Lloyd, et al.*, and should be allowed.

Since claim 1 should be allowable, claims 2-10 dependent thereon should also be allowable.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lloyd, et al.* The examiner’s reasoning with respect to this rejection is essentially the same as for the anticipation rejection of claim 1, except that the examiner points out that *Lloyd, et al.* does not teach a method utilizing the elements set forth therein. The examiner states that it would have been obvious to use the device of *Lloyd, et al.* in a method. However, based on the discussion above, applicant traverses the examiner’s rejection of claim 11, for the same reason that *Lloyd, et al.* does not teach all of the elements of the method; namely, that *Lloyd, et al.* does not teach automatically controlling the supply and discharge of air to the air spring to cause there to be at least two ranges of incline in the profile of the force-path spring characteristic.

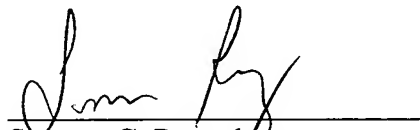
Therefore, claim 11 should also be found to be allowable, along with its dependent claims 12, 13 and 15.

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**Application No. 10/812,833**

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Respectfully submitted,

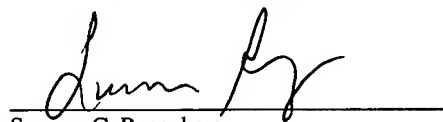
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